

Puerto Rico Survivors in Transitional Sheltering Assistance Program Have until June 30 to Get More Help

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GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico – Hurricane Irma and Maria survivors in FEMA-provided hotels who plan to remain in the continental U.S. and need assistance finding long-term housing should contact local and state agencies and nonprofits since the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program ends June 30.

Eligible survivors who plan to return to Puerto Rico have until June 30 to make their travel arrangements and get FEMA Transportation Assistance to cover the costs. Sunday, July 1, is the last day for hurricane Irma and María survivors to travel using this assistance to return to Puerto Rico.

Transportation Assistance

Survivors who were checked into a hotel participating in FEMA's short-term sheltering program on May 3 can call 800-372-1705 to book a flight to Puerto Rico. Hours are 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Lines will also be open Saturday, June 30 and Sunday, July 1 to accommodate requests. FEMA urges survivors to book their flights NOW. DO NOT wait until the last minute as flight availability may become an issue.

FEMA is providing direct payments to cover airfare expenses for approved applicants, their household members, household pets and service animals. Direct payments will be made to airlines to cover airfare, up to \$100 in baggage costs per household member and pet fees.

In order to be considered eligible costs, all luggage, service animals and reasonable accommodations must be identified at the time that survivors book their airfare. Any minor children must travel with at least one adult household member.



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FEMA will not:

- make direct payments to survivors,
- reimburse costs for meals, ground transportation or shuttle services, or
- reimburse survivors who have already returned to Puerto Rico.

FEMA and its recovery partners continue assisting disaster survivors' transition from short-term sheltering to longer-term housing through the combined efforts of governmental and nonprofit agencies.

FEMA began contacting families in early May to see if they were interested in receiving assistance to return to the island. At least three attempts have been made to contact each family.

Survivors still needing help with longer-term housing assistance, legal advice and crisis counseling are referred to the Immediate Disaster Case Management program. Case managers facilitate access to a broad range of resources. Survivors can call the hotline at 855-742-5993 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. EDT. Bilingual case managers are available. For TTY, visit PuertoRicoRelay.com/TTY.

As of June 22, 1,827 households are checked into hotels and motels through the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program: 559 are in Puerto Rico and 1,268 are in the continental U.S. Of those households, 1,219 households fall into one or more of the following categories:

- 691 have received two months of financial rental assistance from FEMA.
- 230 have withdrawn their applications for federal disaster assistance.
- 165 had homes with insufficient damage and their utilities were on at the time of their housing inspection.
- 141 reported no damage to their home.
- 66 households either failed to prove they lived in the address on their application or had no contact with an inspector or the property claimed was not their primary residence.
- 61 have already had repairs completed on their home through Puerto Rico's Tu Hogar Renace.

Survivors who wish to remain in the continental U.S. after the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program ends should visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4339 to



view a list of services around the country that may provide help.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362) 711/VRS - Video Relay Service). Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish). TTY call 800-462-7585.

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